

## Heroes by ohmybgosh

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**Summary:**

Billy gets a shot at fighting monsters and saving the boy of his dreams.

# Heroes

## Author's Note:

Prompt: "Yo for that writing prompts thing could you do number 5 with harringrove?? I love love love your writing btw!!!"

#5 was "I'm going to take care of you, ok?"

Thanks for the prompt! This one was fun to write and it got lengthy so I'm posting it here rather than tumblr!

Here's my attempt at the Billy-fights-monsters trope. Picture Heroes by Bowie playing in the background, and Stevie of course.

“ *Steve !*” Max screamed, high pitched and fearful.

Crouched behind the rusty Mustang, Billy hesitated.

He felt like he was stuck between a rock and a slightly less hard place; there was an obvious way out but he still felt trapped. *Coward* .

To save Steve Harrington, or not to save Steve Harrington. That was the question. It wasn't nobler to suffer his own selfishness; it was nobler to take arms against a pair of underworld monsters and save the boy of his dreams.

They always got paired together in English class, it was alphabetical, after all. Steve thought Hamlet was brave, smart, a sad case of circumstance. Billy, though, thought Hamlet was a dipshit, an indecisive drama queen who only ever thought of himself. Their joint character analyses never made much sense.

It took him less than three seconds to decide, much less time than the Prince of Denmark. Adrenaline thundered in his ears, his mind racing at 65 miles per hour, but it felt like several minutes, knees bent, muscles tensed, on his heels, fingertips tenting on the ground like he was about to run a 200 meter.

He was afraid. There was no way around that. He was terrified.

*You selfish brat* , his dad said to him. It was true. Billy was selfish. *Self-preservation* , his guidance counselor called it, the first time he got sent there freshman year for punching the soccer captain in the jaw. *You look out for yourself because no one does it for you. You need to learn to look out for others.*

He was selfish. It was selfishness that brought him here in the first place.

This whole stupid thing had been a guess, frantically fleeing his own front door with a bloody lip because Max snuck out. Again. And he wasn't about to take the blame for her. Again.

He had come here on a hunch; he'd seen Max and her friends heading this way on their bikes, Max struggling to keep up with them on her skateboard.

He sped into the junkyard, wheels spinning in Spring mud. He jumped out of the Camaro, half smoked cig between his teeth. He squinted in the dark; he saw a flash of movement behind a stack of blown out tires.

"Max!" he shouted, seething. "Get your ass over here!"

And then something decidedly not Max crept out from behind the tires, something scaly and slimy and on all fours, slinking towards him in the glare of the Camaro's headlights.

His mouth fell open, cig forgotten, smoldering in the grass.

"Get down!" Steve Harrington popped up from behind an old VW Bug, waving his arms frantically.

Billy didn't need telling twice. He threw himself behind the rusted Mustang, breathing hard.

"Harrington," he whispered. His face heated up, partially in anger, partially in something else he didn't like to think about.

Why was Steve always there? Why was Steve everywhere Billy went,

even when Billy hadn't been looking?

Even when Billy didn't want to see him, Steve was there. Like last week, when his dad took his keys away and shoved him bodily from the house when he talked back to Susan. He couldn't drive so he walked down the street, hands shoved in his pockets, glaring at the cars that cruised by, at the normal people on their way home from work or out to visit friends.

Billy hadn't been walking anywhere in particular. He'd just been walking in the dark and in the rain, watching his boots send up spatters from muddy puddles on the sidewalk. He thought about that book he read in grade school, by himself under his dinosaur sheets because there was no one left alive who'd read to him before bed. Shel Silverstein. He wondered where the sidewalk really did end, and when he walked that night he hoped he'd find the end of it, and hop off and find himself in another dimension without Hawkins and without his father, perhaps where everything was inside out or upside down.

And then one familiar car inched to a stop beside him, rolling down the passenger window.

Steve leaned over.

"You need a ride?"

"Is this always how you get hookups?"

"Never mind," Steve sighed, rolling the window back up.

Billy leapt forward, pulling the door open and scrambling in.

"I was joking," he said. "I'll take the ride."

"Kay." Steve gave him a look that Billy ignored. "Where to? Home?"

"No." Billy shook his head, looked out the window. "Just, wherever you're going."

"I'm not really going anywhere." Steve shifted into drive and started off down the road.

Billy glanced at him. “No?”

“No.” Steve chewed on the inside of his cheek, something Billy noticed he did when he was nervous or thinking hard. “Just...going.”

Billy knew exactly what Steve meant, even though Steve hadn’t really said anything. He pulled out the cig he’d stuck behind his ear, fishing around in his pocket for his lighter.

“Don’t!” Steve said sharply. “Sorry, you can’t smoke in here. My dad would kill me.”

“Sounds like a nice guy,” Billy remarked, but stuck the cig back behind his ear.

Steve didn’t say anything, just flicked on the stereo, turning the sound up, an obvious way to say that conversation was over.

A song started playing, familiar, and when the words started up Billy recognized it. *Superstition* .

“You like Stevie Wonder?”

Steve nodded, eyes ahead. “Don’t you?”

Billy shrugged. He did, who didn’t? His mom listened to a lot of Motown, Stevie Wonder included, though Smokey Robinson was her favorite. She loved *You Really Got A Hold On Me* , and she sang it all around the house, flitting from the bathroom to her bedroom to the kitchen, singing all the while, her voice clearing out all the demons in the basement and scaring the skeletons from the closet, Billy trailing behind in the wake of her song.

He didn’t think about the words until she was already gone, and with her absence all the bad things came back. But he was old enough by then to understand that the monsters she warned him about were human the whole time, that the monsters were kids at school, his neighbors, even his own dad, with his rules and his consequences.

Steve didn’t sing aloud to Stevie Wonder, but he mouthed along and tapped his thumbs on the steering wheel. Billy thought he was someone who sang along aloud alone. That thought made his lips

twitch and his stomach do summersaults.

He wondered if anyone ever called Steve “Stevie”. Maybe his mom. Billy’s mom had an assortment of names for him, but it’d been so long that he’d heard them that he was starting to forget what they were.

That night, Steve replayed the tape twice, driving passed the “Leaving Hawkins” sign and hopping on the highway. Steve didn’t speak the whole night, and neither did Billy, who was almost never at a loss for words.

At some point they turned back, Billy wasn’t sure when because he started to drift off, head leaned against the rain lashed window, listening to Stevie sing and Steve hum along quietly. Steve asked him once what street he was on, and Billy pointed at the house when they were close. When he hopped out of the car Steve said goodnight, so quietly Billy couldn’t be sure he really heard it, and then Steve was leaning over, pulling the passenger door shut and driving off into the night.

But here and now, this hellish night in the junkyard, Billy heard Max scream, and the loud thump and the shatter of something hitting glass that sounded horrifyingly Steve sized.

Billy sprinted toward Steve. He saw the Beamer, dented and sparkling with glass, and the creature that feebly stirred in the front seat. The monster must’ve hit the stereo, because *Superstition* blared out of the speakers.

Billy barked out a laugh, something warm fluttering in the pit of his stomach. The fact that Steve had been listening to the same album all week surprised a smile out of him.

The five kids peeked up from behind an overturned empty oil drum. Max was there, *safe*, he registered in the back of his mind. And so was Lucas Sinclair, Henderson, Wheeler’s brother, and Byers’ brother. Henderson jumped up and down, screaming, “Kill it, Steve, kill it!”

And then Billy spotted Steve, several feet away, clutching his right shoulder, bat hanging loosely in his hand. His normally impeccable

hair hung lifeless and stuck to the sweat that coated his forehead and the back of his neck. The second creature stalked toward him.

His teeth clenched in pain but his eyes were determined, and he grunted, fingers gripping the bat and lifting it with difficulty to get ready to swing again.

*Idiot* , Billy thought frantically.

“Harrington!” he shouted.

Steve was backing away slowly, breathing heavily, but his stance was steady and strong. He pivoted, barely glancing at Billy before Billy was at his side, sliding the bat out of his grip.

“Hey,” Steve started. Billy put a hand on his chest, pushing him back, and turned to face the creature.

It bared its thousand teeth at him, many lipped mouth unfurling like a carnivorous flower. He smiled grimly, digging his heels into the ground. He gripped the bat and lifted it over his shoulder.

*Oh shit, here goes nothing.*

Billy didn’t ask for this. He didn’t ask, had never wanted, to be battling monsters in the middle of bumfuck Indiana.

But he’d do it for Steve.

Steve was always the hero, whether or not he meant to be. All the kids saw it, and that’s why they looked up to him, even the little Wheeler who rolled his eyes when Henderson fawned over Steve. Steve was Billy’s savior, too, and he had no idea. He had no idea how his presence made Billy’s life the tiniest bit bearable again, how pulling over and offering him a ride, when Billy felt like walking and walking until he reached the end of the sidewalk, was heroic, how bopping his head to Stevie Wonder, how leaning against his Beamer with his Ray Bans on and a frown on his face when he thought no one was watching made him a hero.

Billy Hargrove was a selfish prick, everyone said so. Billy wouldn’t do shit for just anybody, but he’d do just about anything for Steve

Harrington. He'd kill a monster from the underworld for Steve. Hell, he'd step off a cliff for Steve if someone asked him to, and when he thought about it, he came to the conclusion that he'd step off a cliff for Steve even if nobody asked him to.

The monster, real this time, maybe his mom had been right all along, crouched, a high pitched growl ripping from its throat. Its muscles tensed, like it was getting ready to pounce.

Billy closed his eyes for a moment, sucked in a sharp breath. Steve was a hero. Billy was not. But he could pretend to be; he was a good pretender.

He heard the monster leap and his eyes snapped open.

He swung the bat, missed, and ducked, throwing himself flat on the ground. He felt the *whoosh* of air above, the monster's many toothed mouth closing with a squelch just where he'd been standing before.

He heard Max, in the distance, scream his name this time, and someone else's (Henderson's?) shrill "oh *shit* !"

He jumped up and swung again. This time the bat struck, nails piercing through thick skin on the monster's middle. It screamed, shaking its head back and forth, and Billy raised the bat again.

"Kick its ass!" Max shouted suddenly, and in her wake Byers cried "You can do it!"

The thing lashed out at him again but he was ready; it snapped and he swerved, planting his feet and swinging with all his might, hitting it straight in the neck with a disgusting *pop* , dark blood spattering his face and clothes, and sending it three feet backwards. It hit the ground and stayed there, unmoving, scaly legs twisted at an odd angle, neck limp.

"Is it dead?" someone whispered behind him after a minute; it sounded like Sinclair.

Dustin Henderson darted forward. He avoided Steve's feeble attempt to stop him and skidded to a halt beside Billy, eyes roving over the dead monster at their feet.



"That. Was. Awesome," he said slowly, with a lisp, looking up at Billy with a mixture of fear and appreciation in his wide eyes.

"Thanks." Billy wiped his face with the back of his sleeve.

"Lucas, it's dead!" Dustin called. "Hey, guys, what the hell are we gonna do with these?"

Max and the other three came to Dustin's side, staring at the monster with a gross fascination; the little Byers was the only one who wrinkled his nose.

"You ok?" Max asked quietly, looking up at Billy.

"Fine. Guess it's good I found you," he said, intending to sound angry, but he couldn't help but smile at the end.

She grinned at him.

"We can't just leave them here," Wheeler was saying.

"My mom asked if we could refrain from storing anything in the fridge," Byers piped up. "The clean-up was rough."

"Bury them?" Dustin supplied.

"Yeah, and what happens when someone goes digging in a few years?"

"Well it was just a *suggestion* -"

Billy took a step back, turning to Steve, who stood a few feet from the kids. His face was pinched with pain, but the horror at the sight of his BMW ultimately overruled all other emotion.

"You ok?" Billy asked.

"My car," Steve said weakly, still clutching his shoulder. *Superstition* had started up again, like the tape was on loop.

"What about your arm?"

"My dad's gonna murder me," Steve whimpered.

"Relax, he won't find out." Billy eyed the Beamer. The hood was dented, and the windshield was destroyed. But those could be fixed. "I know a guy."

"You do?" Steve asked hopefully.

"Sure." Billy waved a hand flippantly. He didn't need to elaborate - the guy wasn't a friend, more like someone who owed Billy a favor. "I'm going to take care of you, ok? I'll fix this."

"What's in it for you?" Steve frowned at him, narrowed his eyes.

Bill shrugged and looked away. "I dunno, I owe you. You tried to fight those things on your own. You protected Max."

"Yeah," Steve said slowly. He was looking at Billy strangely now, almost in disbelief, still clutching his dislocated shoulder.

"Hey, what about your arm?" Billy asked, in concern, but mostly to change the subject, because Steve was still staring at him and it was starting to make him sweaty. "We should go to the hospital."

"No," Steve shook his head, closing his eyes against the pain. "My -"

"Your Dad would kill you?" Billy guessed.

"Yeah." Steve chewed on his lip. "But, I know a guy."

"Who can relocate your shoulder?"

"I think so. Probably. He's good with this sort of thing. Law enforcement," Steve explained. He glanced over at the kids, crowded around the dead dog-like thing. "Friend of the family."